



# Taekwondo Union Colour Belt Grading Schedules

A guide to instructors, students, examiners : The following is to provide a minimum, standardised grading syllabus for students, instructors and examiners.

**All gradings should be marked by a formality befitting its importance.**

## **Colour Belt Gradings.**

There is a requirement to ensure standardised gradings officiated by TUNZ. Due to instructors having various strengths, this will be revealed to some extent in their students' performance, but there are parts of the grading syllabus that every student needs to master, and that every examiner needs to ensure the student has mastered. There are opportunities for every student to achieve through the grades.

The Taekwondo Union grading schedules are designed for gradual progression through the colour belts and they mark various levels of competence.

The completion of various colour belt grades signifies a student's apprenticeship through the grades from beginner, junior, intermediate and senior grades. (**Beginner:** white belt; yellow tab. **Junior:** yellow, green tab; green **Intermediate:** blue tab, blue, red tab **Senior:** red, black tab)

The Taekwondo Union recommends that the minimum period of time training (regular training) between grades is four months at the beginner and junior colour belt levels. Note: exceptional students or those usually with previous martial arts experience may be competent enough to double grade at these levels.

At the intermediate colour belt level, the minimum period of time training between Grades is four months (regular training). There should be no double grades at this level.

At the senior colour belt level, the minimum period of time training between red belt black tab and testing for your black belt is one year. There are no double grades at this level.

The colour belt apprenticeship gives you the basic tools to go on training; the black belt training allows you to go on and master Taekwondo.

The club instructor has the full decision making power as to who will grade, and when, noting the above time frames. The examiner will confirm that standards for each belt level have been reached.

The club instructor must ensure that the grading candidate is not only physically ready to grade, but has attained the mental and emotional readiness to do so.

**Opportunities for all students:** There will be students with disabilities and/or long term injuries or who are older - their needs must be taken into account. The instructor should indicate this to the examiner prior to the start of the grading, and indicate what the candidate CAN do. Fitness testing by examiners can take place at all belt levels.

**Expression of Energy:** this is to be exhibited at every grading, obviously at varying levels (eg white belts will be fearful and may not express energy like other colour belts will). Kihaps are important and aid this expression of energy. All belt levels need to be able to explain the importance of kihaps (eg of appropriate answers: frighten the enemy; help with your breathing; increases your energy, calling for help, etc).

**Technique: (WTF technique)** at every level, and therefore on a learning continuum:

- \***stances** – differentiated from one another and demonstrated correctly
- \***punches** using the correct part of the fist (with thumb not sticking out) – to the correct part of the body
- \***blocks** starting and finishing at the correct part of the body with correct hand position
- \***kicks** directed at correct part of the body using correct ball, heel, side or top of foot technique, with chamber position and knowledge of why this is important

## **Basic Requirements for demonstration at gradings:**

### **Basic Movements**

**Basics 1 or equivalent – junior belts**

**Basics 1 and 2 or equivalent – intermediate belts**

**Basics 1, 2 or 3 or equivalent – senior belts**

**Taeguks (not at white belt grading unless indicated by instructor)**

#### **CURRENT WTF STYLE**

- Minimum:**
- Yellow – taeguk 1 (Il Jang)**
  - Green tab – up to and including taeguk 2 (Ee Jang)**
  - Green – up to and including taeguk 3 (Sam Jang)**
  - Blue tab – up to and including taeguk 4 (Sa Jang)**
  - Blue – up to and including taeguk 5 (O Jang)**
  - Red tab – up to and including taeguk 6 (Yuk Jang)**
  - Red – up to and including taeguk 7 (Chil Jang)**

## **Black tab – up to and including taeguk 8 (Pal Jang)**

**Pre-Arranged Sparring:** (not at white belt level unless indicated by instructor).

Choreographed by each individual club. Number of sparring/self-defence techniques (attacks followed up by defence – and using both sides where applicable) should increase with belt level. (Suggested: 2-4 techniques at junior belt level; 4-6 techniques at intermediate belt level; 6-8 techniques at senior belt level)

**Break Falls:** x 2 forward followed by defence; x 2 backward followed by defence. **Dive rolls** followed by defence at intermediate belt level and above, or when indicated by club instructor

**Power Test:** again, on the learning continuum. Each instructor to indicate techniques to be demonstrated. Number of techniques should increase as belt level increases. Suggestions for power series are noted below and are only a guide for instructors.

Suggested:

- white belt – 9 techniques – 3 hand, 3 kicking, 3 combination;
- yellow belt – 11 techniques – 3 hand, 3 kicking, 3 combo, 2 jumping
- green tab – 13 techniques (3 hand, 4 kicking, 4 combo, 2 jumping)
  
- green – 15 technique (3 hand, 5 kicking, 5 combo, 2 jumping)
- blue tab – 16 techniques (include 3 jumping techniques from here on)
- blue – 16 techniques
- red tab – 18 techniques
- red – 18 techniques
- black tab – 20 techniques

**Self-Defence:** (not at white belt level unless indicted by club instructor) On a learning continuum: Instructor organises what techniques will be demonstrated. Knowledge of why a technique might work, and what to do if the technique does not work, to be demonstrated. Correct techniques re stance, punching, blocking, kicking to be demonstrated at all levels (on a continuum). Expression of energy extremely important. Suggestions below are only a guide for instructors.

Suggestion:

- yellow belt – 2 hand techniques – both sides
- Green tip – 3 techniques (at least 2 of these showing both sides)
- Green – 4 techniques (at least 2 of these showing both sides)
- Blue tab – 5 techniques (at least 3 of these showing both sides)
- Blue – 6 techniques (showing both sides)
- Red tab – 7 techniques (showing both sides)
- Red – 8 techniques (showing both sides)
- Black tab – 10 techniques (showing both sides)

**Free Sparring** (not at white belt level unless indicated by club instructor)

**WTF rules.**

Junior level – non-contact unless indicated by club instructor\*

Intermediate level – touch contact fully padded up, unless indicated by club instructor\*

Senior level – full contact, fully padded up, unless indicated by club instructor\*

\*Age, injuries, disabilities should be noted and sparring style adapted accordingly.

Suggestions: Yellow – 2x 1 minute round (minimum)  
Green tab – 2 x 1 minute round (minimum)  
Green – 2 x 1-1/2 minute rounds (minimum)  
Blue tab – 2 x 1-1/2 minute rounds (minimum)  
Blue – 3 x 1-1/2 minute rounds (minimum)  
Red tab – 3 x 1-1/2 minute rounds (minimum)  
Red – 4 x 1-1/2 minute rounds (minimum)  
Black tab – 5 rounds of 2 minutes (minimum)

This is not a tournament – head contact will need to be minimised for safety reasons. However, at all levels, a knowledge of how to keep out of reach of head contact if possible to be demonstrated, as a student will want to show all the kicks in their repertoire.

Safety requirements – if tap or full contact – mouth guards, shin/foot guards, arm guards, body pads, head guard. At senior level, strongly recommend inclusion of gloves. Supporting club members to position themselves around the hall to ensure viewer safety, and safety of grading members.

**SMASHING** – may be introduced at junior level, and tested according to instructor's discretion. To be introduced at intermediate level, and then progressed. Senior belt level: suggest 6 techniques: 1-2 hand techniques; 1- 2 using stationary kicking techniques; and 2-4 jumping kick techniques. Note that breakable boards can be used by Juniors. (Age and injuries need to be accommodated.)

**THEORY:** as noted at each belt level, a knowledge of HOW and WHY things are done a certain way is very important for developing correct technique. Again, this is a continuum and students should be able to answer theoretical questions delivered to them by the examiner. A knowledge of Taekwondo Union tenets, and what these tenets mean, may be asked. A knowledge of the Korean names for the poomsae may be tested (this knowledge benefits students wishing to engage in competition). A knowledge(cumulative) of the Korean terms for the various techniques would be beneficial (this knowledge benefits students who want to further their competition and/or judging careers in poomsae).

**FITNESS:** As noted above, at the discretion of the examiner, this can be tested as extra to the basic grading (eg the examiner may request the student to do extra push-ups, do an extra long demonstration during power series, do extra free-sparring, etc)

**DISCIPLINE:** Doboks must be clean and tidy, with the belt tied correctly. Jewellery must not be worn (exception being the wedding ring) or must be covered (eg newly pierced ears).

Trimmed finger and toe nails. Hair pulled back neatly (ie not hanging in the face). Women/girls may wear a **white** sport bra or Tee under dobok top.

**Examiners** are to be dressed appropriately – in formal mufti (eg dark trousers, white shirt, jacket, tie if appropriate), Union clothing, dobok; or if grading their own club, club track suit.

Water bottles, jackets, and sparring gear and focus pads are to be placed neatly in the dojang – quickly accessible when required in the grading.

Grading begins with a full forming up of all present club members; bowing to the flag (if there is one); and bowing to Examiner, Instructor, club black belts in order of dan. All members to then sit at edge of grading area in belt order. (If cold, those not immediately grading can put on jackets.) Examiner, Instructor or designated club member to “call up” those grading at a specific level. When club member is ‘called up’, he/she must respond by quickly getting to feet, calling “yes” in a loud voice, bowing to examiner, and moving quickly to designated position on the floor, in clear view of the examiner.

Disciplined behaviour while waiting to grade must be shown – chatting/ “fooling around” may lead to candidate not grading. When spoken to, a candidate must respond respectfully. Swearing will lead to an immediate cancellation of the grading. Candidates’ behaviour must exhibit that they understand the tenets of Taekwondo – courtesy, integrity, self-control, indomitable spirit, perseverance. From intermediate level and beyond the candidates should be able to state what the tenets are if asked by an examiner. This is all part of the mental/emotional readiness to grade.

Some clubs show respect to one or more flags (usually the New Zealand flag, and sometimes the Korean flag – perhaps others as well) and this is at the discretion of the Instructor. A table and chair should be set up for the examiner, and a white table cloth cover the table.

The grading venue often has an area for the parents/guests to sit, and a senior club member assigned to ensure these guests are directed to the correct area.

Senior club members who are not grading can be assigned as helpers (eg for holding pads; helping to roll out mats for breakfalls/dive rolls if required; helping graders pad up for sparring; partnering a grader for self-defence and/or pre-arranged sparring; sparring with examination candidates; and ensuring club discipline on the sides when members are waiting to grade or who have finished their grading).

Club instructor to ensure correct forms are filled out and ready for the examiner. Grading form indicating change of grades can later be scanned or photographed and sent to TUNZ secretary ([secretary@tunz.net.nz](mailto:secretary@tunz.net.nz)) and certificates will be sent back to instructors as soon as grading fees have been paid and the Treasurer notifies the certificate printer that this has been done. Please ensure you put a postal address on your grading forms. TUNZ fees can be internet banked (again, please contact [secretary@tunz.net.nz](mailto:secretary@tunz.net.nz) if you don’t know the account).

**IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE GRADINGS, OR THE GRADING SCHEDULE, PLEASE CONTACT THE EXAMINATION DIRECTOR AT [secretary@tunz.net.nz](mailto:secretary@tunz.net.nz)**



